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Representative Johnson,

Please allow me to applaud your efforts to have a commemorative license plate in our state dedicated to hospice care. As you know, our hospice providers are an integral part of our health care communities and those patients and families faced with life limiting illness.

As a representative for an area that is largely rural in nature, you are aware that Gladwin and Clare counties are underserved for health care. Our hospice, as well as other providers, gives much needed care to families in their homes and extended care facilities. Care provided by hospice greatly improves the lives of the recipients and those that care for them. People are cared for in their environment of choice with attention on comfort and palliative treatment. This helps avoid unnecessary hospitalizations and institutionalization of individuals at the end of their lives.

As a practical matter, hospice saves our Federal and State governments a great deal of our health care dollars. Certainly raising awareness of hospice care in our state would be a great help in our current health care crisis.

I have personally served the area you represent and those communities north for more than the past decade and I see daily the impact hospice has on our area. Both as a field nurse and now as the manager of Mercy Hospice, I have witnessed how hospice can impact patient and their loved ones. Many people who would have no alternative but to live out their days in a nursing home have benefited in care from professionals and volunteers who also are their community members and neighbors.

Again, thanks for your efforts.

Don Dixon RN, CHPN

Mercy Hospice Clinical Manager

